

In the Claims

B1

In claim 7, line 1, please change "large object" to - cargo container- .

Remarks

Claims 1-7 are pending in the application. All claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Husseiny. Additionally, claim 7 stands rejected for failure to provide an antecedent basis for the term "the cargo container," which deficiency is remedied in the above amendment.

Embodiments of the invention claimed in this continuation application provide an apparatus and method for imaging the contents of large cargo containers, using a vehicle that provides both over-road mobility as well as the capability to scan long objects. In accordance with independent claim 1, a scatter detector is required that provides a scatter signal during both forward and backward traversal of the cargo container, whereas independent claim 7 requires the step of processing a signal output of the scatter detector as the reversibly moveable bed is moved forward and backward.

The last claimed feature of bi-directional data collection is of particular advantage in the inspection of large cargo containers, in order to achieve coverage of a large region of the interior volume of a tall container within the constraints of a practical distance between the source of radiation and the wall of the container nearest the source. The advantage of increased coverage while maintaining high inspection throughput is discussed in the last paragraph of p. 11.

The requirement of a system capable of bi-directional scanning, with alternate

passes in the forward and reverse directions, is not suggested by Hussein, nor is it obvious over any of the four inspection modalities described by Hussein.

The fact that a vehicle may be driven in reverse for parking or for avoiding large objects does not make obvious the bi-directional acquisition of x-ray scatter data. Bi-directional data acquisition is a distinct modality addressing a problem (coverage of a cargo height up to 14') requiring multiple passes. The passes may be achieved by backing up the vehicle and rescanning the cargo at a new range of angles. Higher throughput may be achieved, however, if the system is capable of acquiring data in both directions. Such a problem is not addressed in the ordinary operation of ground vehicles.

Nor is such a problem addressed in any of the modalities described by Hussein. Hussein does not teach that baggage could be scanned forwards and backwards, nor would there be any motivation to do so. Hussein's portable probe used for inspection of concealed compartments aboard vessels for detection of drugs has no bearing on forward or backward operation of vehicles. And Hussein's fourth embodiment, the mine detector summarized in col. 14, beginning at line 52 and described in detail between col. 39, line 34 and the end of the Detailed Description, at col. 46, laterally scans a beam across a transverse swatch of the ground as a source and a detector are propelled in a forward direction on an all terrain vehicle remotely controlled by an operator.

Acquiring x-ray scatter data in both forward and backward directions of motion

of a reversible bed is not obvious in the context of Husseiny's land mine apparatus because it would be unsafe for a vehicle to scan for mines in the direction headed toward personnel.

Thus the feature of data acquisition during both forward and backward motion of the bed are not suggested by Husseiny, and both claims 1 and 7 are deemed patentable over this reference. Similarly, dependent claims 2-6 are allowable over all art of record.

Reexamination and allowance of this application are thus respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. J. Petuchowski', written in a cursive style.

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